



Personal Safety Nets Newsletter®

Inspired by Hope

August 2009, Issue 20

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Changes and Challenges



For the past three years Judy and John have offered their take on the unique message of "helping communities" to a variety of interested audiences. Through the publication of their book, *Personal Safety Nets: Getting Ready for Life's Inevitable Changes and Challenges*, plus a workbook and an audio book, they have been able to present stories and plans to help others know what a Personal Safety Net entails, and how it can be used effectively in lives and workplaces.

But often reading a book is not enough of a call to action. That is what our readers have been telling us. **They say they, or their group, or business need some training, or a workshop to attend, or a plan put**

Letters, We Get Letters

Dear Safety Net Team,

Q: How do you find such interesting stories from around the globe?

A: Some of our stories are first-hand from PSN staff experiences and some are sent to us from friends who know what we do, and follow our work. This month our story comes from Gary Smith, SJ, who currently ministers with Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS) in South Africa. "Pamela's Story" is used with permission of Gary and the work originally appeared in *They Come Back Singing*, © 2008 by Loyola Press. If you've read our books, taken our classes, or know of our work and have a story that exemplifies the creation or use of Personal Safety Nets information and goals, we welcome your [submissions via our web site](#).

Pamela's Story

War was ravaging Uganda and Pamela was just another one of its victims. Before her fourteenth birthday **she found herself, no longer with parents or relatives, in the Rhino Camp Refugee Resettlement Center. Seeking some safety she volunteered at Mass** where she heard the JRS sponsors girls in the secondary schools of Adjumani. Pamela knew that an education was her only route to safety and success.



With one thousand Uganda shillings (about fifty cents) Pamela left Rhino and started walking, alone. It was the hot, dry season but by the end of her first day she came to the village of Lebongi. She had her dinner at Lebongi: **a bag of peanuts that cost her one hundred shillings. The villagers allowed her to drink some water** from the village borehole. She slept that night on a dirt floor in a roofless church.

The next day, **for eighty shillings, she secured a motorboat ride across the Nile.** By evening she reached the village of Maaju, an area filled with hostile troops. For her evening meal (her one and only each day) Pamela spent her last one hundred shillings for a few bananas. She again slept on a church floor.

On the third day, Pamela arrived at Adjumani. This day she walked without food or water. As she sat under the shade of a mango tree, she realized she owned nothing but a small book in a plastic bag and the clothes she was wearing. **Possessions weren't important, an education was.** Pamela had successfully completed primary school but to attend secondary school entailed fees. In urban schools, yearly fees

together to move then to a more useful understanding of Personal Safety Nets. They don't want the burden placed solely on their shoulders at a time of need or change, and we understand that - so we have taken the next step to assist our readers and patrons.

We're moving to the next level - to becoming an agency that can specifically help you, your family, your organization, and your business by providing more unique services to a wider variety of individuals and groups. With strong and positive feedback from readers and presentation attendees, we are using our materials and presentations as jumping off points to become more active in the workshop, consultation and education fields, as well as speaking at local, regional and national conventions and conferences.

As you will see if you head to our [web site](#) we're updating daily. If you check out our "[Services](#)" section on the web you'll see that we have **focused our attention on five specific ways we can reach out to the greater community.** We ask you to take a look, and see if we offer something that can help you - and to call our new number 206-659-0665 or email us at info@personasafetynets.com so that we can provide more specific information of what we can offer YOU.

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Our Writers

can be millions of shillings. **Even in refugee settlements, each term costs about twenty thousand shillings.** In addition, refugees must find money for food, mosquito nets, soap, a change of clothes, shoes, a portable mattress, writing paper, pens, and a kerosene lamp.

Pamela found and camped out in front of the JRS offices in Adjumani. She was soon noticed by Gary Smith, who was amazed by her journey. She impressed Gary and the staff as a young woman who had not come to them simply for charity. **Pamela was willing to work for what she wanted but first she needed help finding the resources to weave together a plan to replace fear and isolation with a sense of security and community.**

Pamela received help presenting her story, writing letters and making speeches and eventually was admitted to a local JRS-administered facility. **She paid her fees through grants and assistance from the community. While most students have a fairly carefree path, Pamela's story represents the determination to climb the mountain and cross over rather than terminate the journey because of anticipated and real hardships.**

[Read the Full Story](#)

Moving Ahead



We've moved into a beautiful new office in West Seattle and have hired new staff to reach out to the community and offer partnerships with business and organizations, as well as to provide individuals more workshops and materials.

If you're in town, come take a look and enjoy a conversation and a cup of tea. Also, with the holidays approaching and a new year not far beyond, think of the challenges and changes ahead for so many and consider telling others of the advantage of our services - tell friends, colleagues and your boss. You can make a difference in how others face the world of change and challenge

PS: For those who love our books, we haven't forgotten our readers. We're working on a new one to better connect you and your kids - more info soon!

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Safety Net Connections - Good Ideas, A Click Away



[Two Session Class: Pulling It All Together](#)

West Seattle, WA - October 6 & 13, 2009

In this highly interactive two session class we'll help you assess and build

[**More About John**](#)

your personal safety net: the people, plans and resources you need to have in place for life's inevitable challenges. By the end of the class, participants will have started a resource notebook holding the information needed to successfully move forward. Course enrollment fees include a book, workbook and notebook.

[**More About Judy**](#)

\$75.00 Includes the book, *Personal Safety Nets: Getting Ready for Life's Inevitable Changes and Challenges*, accompanying workbook, *Get Ready/Get Started* and personal notebook. Light snacks provided.

Space is limited - call to make your reservation now. For more details, please contact the office: 206-659-0665.

If you're interested in exploring a customized Multi-Session Class, we'd be happy to visit you and discuss your unique situation.